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Dear Joshua:

I am aware that neither of us have the time to engage in an
extended debate over the network. I hope therefore that this will be my
last message to you having to do with your N.Y.T. review - although I do
hope that we will have other occasions to write to one another.

Your last message came to me as I was about to leave on a short
trip.   All I had time for then was to respond with the cryptic note that
you must have gotten by now. Let me now fill that out a little.

Let me say first that I do not consider myself a journalist who
is commenting on some field outside his normal working community - nor
did I think I was writing a book that was to serve as a sort of consensus
document for computer science or the AI branch of CS. If there is
anything clear about the book, it must be that it is highly idiosyncratic
(to a fault), that it presents not how things are but how Joseph
Weizenbaum perceives them. Nevertheless, I tried to be careful to get my
facts straight. Part of my caretaking was to place the manuscript of the
entire book on the MIT AI machine and to let everyone know that it was
there.   I did all the editing in that mode.   I did in fact get lots of
comments from Stanford and certainly from MIT many of which prompted me
to rewrite entire chapters. I gave Marvin Minsky a copy of the MS a full
year before publication and pressed him for comments and criticisms.
(Many copies of the Ms.   were circulated among the MIT AI faculty and
graduate students at the same time and were widely commented on - with
effect, I might add.)   Marvin suggested precisely one change which I
promptly made.   I asked for permission to quote for virtually all the
quotes that appear in the book. No author wrote to me saying he no
longer stands behind what I was quoting. I wrote to Ken Colby especially
but got no response from him.

McCarthy in his scathing criticisms of the book (which I
cheerfully receive and to which I have and will respond) never asserts
that I misrepresent anyone's position. He does say that he cannot find
the quote I attribute to him and that it asserts what he did not believe
in 1973 or now.   Well, I have the notes I took when twice viewing the
tape from which the quote was taken.   I challenged him with his statement
at the Stanford AI meeting in 1973 and he defended it then.   He again
defended it (Winograd and many others were present) on March 9th, 1976 at
M.I.T. I read the Colby quotes at the Stanford AI meeting with Ken in the
audience. He commented from the floor - but never to say he no longer
believed what I quoted him as having written.   Newell was there also (I

have the tape) and in a lengthy comment on what I had said (I quoted the Simon remark on the "whole man") he criticized me only on the ground that I could not prove what the limits of the computer were - i.e. that it could not simulate or account for the whole man. He did not say that Simon no longer held to what he published in 1969.

I believe (perhaps naively) that publishing something entails a

commitment that cannot be undone by private communications. I find no recantations of the quotes I have used in the public literature. To the contrary, the most recent lectures by Simon and Minsky (April 2nd and January 15th at MIT respectively) reflect and assert the very positions I describe in the book.

Just by the way, I wish you would ask Paul Armer about the calm, unemotional, thouroughly professional and sustained part I played in the ABM debate.

Finally, Joshua, I did not and do not "demand" anything from you. Nor do I consider your "20 year" remark a criticism of my work that I cannot "take". I consider it a statistical error that, once it has been called to your attention, you would want to repair.

As ever
Joe